

### 1 800 Collect Illinois

Illinois is the 5th most densely inhabited state in the United States and is the most populated state in the Midwest region. Nearly all of its people, about 65%, are located in the Chicago metropolitan area. The ambiance of Illinois reflects a small-town or rural character. Illinois is often noted as being a microcosm for the whole nation.

There are a great abundance of natural resources in the state of Illinois including petroleum and coal in the south. In the northern and central regions of the state there are small industrial cities and great agricultural productivity. With Chicago in the northeast, Illinois has a broad economic base. The state is a vital transportation center. The Port of Chicago connects the Great lakes to the Mississippi River via the Illinois River. O'Hare International Airport has been considered amongst the world's busiest airports for decades. Voted as the "most average state," Illinois has had a long reputation as a bellwether in both cultural and politics and social terms.

Illinois achieved its statehood in the year 1818. Settlers began coming from Kentucky during the 1810s and within some time, the state filled up from south to north. The city of Chicago was established during the 1830s on the banks of the Chicago River. This is among the few natural harbors on southern Lake Michigan. Illinois' rich prairie land became some of the world's most productive and valuable farmlands with the railroads and the invention of John Deere's self-scouring steel plow. Immigrant farmers from Germany and Sweden came to live.

The growth of the many industrial jobs along with coal mining during the 1900s started to attract the many immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe. Illinois became an essential manufacturing center all through both of the world wars. The Great African American Migration from the rural South to Chicago created a large community which founded the city's well-known blues and jazz cultures.

There have been 3 U.S. Presidents elected whilst living within Illinois. These were Ulysses S. Grant, Barack Obama and Abraham Lincoln, although, the only President who was raised and born within Illinois was Ronald Reagan. The official state slogan "Land of Lincoln" is shown on the states' license plates today as a way to commemorate and honor Lincoln.